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RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 4496
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RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 8298
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 5024
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 001301

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TAGS: MARR PGOV PINR PREL JA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER FONBERG'S TOKYO
MEETINGS

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES JAMES P. ZUMWALT, REASONS 1.4(B) & (D)

11. (C) Canadian Deputy Minister of National Defense Robert Fonberg visited Tokyo from 1-3 June for talks with senior Japanese government officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and Ministry of Defense (MOD). Embassy of Canada Political Counselor Karen MacArthur told Poloff that Fonberg was seeking ways to expand bilateral security cooperation with Japan.

Strategic Consultative Dialogue

12. (C) Following up on a proposal given to Japanese Foreign Minister Nakasone by Canadian Foreign Minister Cannon during a 14-15 May 2009 visit, Fonberg proposed a 2 2 strategic consultative dialogue to be held at the Ministerial level. Fonberg envisions the dialogue as a way for Japan and Canada to strengthen bilateral security cooperation. Noting Canada's interest in political developments in the North Pacific, Fonberg hoped for a broadened security relationship under the umbrella of the 2 2.

13. (C) Fonberg told the Japanese government that the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo would work on an initial scoping document draft. Canada hopes to obtain agreement from Japan on the framework of the dialogue in time for a signing ceremony by the Canadian and Japanese Prime Ministers on the margins of either the G-8 or APEC in 2010.

Bilateral Access Agreement

14. (C) During the Canadian FM's visit, Canada secured Japan's agreement for Canadian planes to access Japanese (or US Forces Japan) airfields for refueling during operations unrelated to UNC on the Korean Peninsula. This had become an issue following Japan's refusal to allow a Canadian plane to land on its way to HA/DR operations in the aftermath of the Burma cyclone.

15. (C) Fonberg thanked Japan for the agreement and emphasized that Canada hoped to "test" it with an initial landing later

this summer. While pleased with the written agreement, Canadian Embassy Political Counselor MacArthur noted a high degree of resistance to support for Canadian military flights by the Japanese Air Self-Defense Forces (JASDF) and was not confident that actually exercising the agreement would be a smooth process.

Illegal Fishing Monitoring

¶ 6. (C) Fonberg told the Japanese that one way in which Canada hopes to exercise the bilateral access agreement is through refueling and crew rest support for Canadian planes tracking illegal drift net fishing boats operating in the North Pacific. MOD reportedly supported Fonberg's proposal but MOFA pushed back, stating that the request should be worked through the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC).

(Note: The US Coast Guard presented a similar proposal to the Japanese government in 2007, albeit using landing rights granted to the U.S. under the Status of Forces Agreement, but was equally rejected by MOFA.) The Canadian Embassy plans to demarche the Japanese government on this issue no later than 12 June.

Interoperability

¶ 7. (C) Canada is very interested in increased Japanese

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participation in multilateral peace and security operations and, as such, would like to work toward greater interoperability between the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the Canadian military. Fonberg told the Japanese that Canada was tired of goodwill ship visits and wanted to do joint training with the SDF. (Note: The SDF and Canadian military do not train together today, except in a very limited capacity in multilateral events like RIMPAC). Canada has invited, and Japan has accepted, participation in the Canadian 100th anniversary fleet review set to take place in ¶ 2010. Canada would particularly like Japan to send warships to participate.

Logistics Hub

¶ 8. (C) Unrelated to the visit of Mr. Fonberg, Canadian Operational Support Commander Major General Daniel Benjamin visited Japan in May 2009 and proposed the idea of a logistics hub to be based somewhere in Japan that could supply Canadian forces with necessary equipment support for missions the Canadian Armed Forces are conducting. The Japanese government expressed concern that discussing this would be difficult in the current political environment.

¶ 9. (C) General Benjamin emphasized that Canada wasn't seeking to set up the hub in the near term, but was interested in discussing with Japan how it might work should it be politically feasible at some point. Canada is exploring other regional options as well, including Singapore and Seoul. Political Counselor MacArthur opined, however, that the general's proposal was "a few steps down the road" and was not in line with what the Canadian Embassy deemed feasible even in the medium term. Based on her discussions with the Japanese government, the hub proposal was "not going anywhere fast" and was "ten years down the road at best."

ZUMWALT